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THE *GOSPEL OF NICODEMUS* IN THE SLAVIC MANUSCRIPT TRADITION: INITIAL OBSERVATIONS

*This article is a first presentation of a review of the research into the Slavic text editions of the so-*called Gospel of Nicodemus − *itself a compilation of different texts − defined in both Latin and Greek traditions as* Acta Pilati, Descensus Christi ad inferos *and* Cyclus Pilati.

*Cet article présente un premier état de la recherche sur les recensions slaves de l'Évangile de Nicodème, qui est lui-même une compilation de plusieurs textes désignés sous les noms d'*Acta Pilati, Descensus ad inferos *et* Cyclus Pilati *dans les traditions grecques et latines.*

1. These pages are a first presentation, as complete as possible, of a review of the research into the Slavic text editions of the so-called *Gospel of Nicodemus* (further: GN) − itself a compilation of different texts − defined in both Latin and Greek traditions as *Acta Pilati*, *Descensus Christi ad inferos* and *Cyclus Pilati*. Unfortunately, we had little opportunity to work with the Slavic manuscripts in libraries (except for the National Library of Sts Cyril and Methodius in Sofia). We were not able to work with the Greek and Latin manuscripts either and our observations on the Greek and Latin text tradition are based on editions belonging to different redactions.

In this manner, everything we are doing at the moment is at an initial stage. We are convinced that a critical edition of the Slavic texts should be the final stage of our work on Slavic, Greek and Latin manuscripts. However, it is possible that some of the suggestions given below may be changed after confrontation with the actual material.

2. Before we start to discuss the history of the text, we want to define and specify some useful terms. *Gesta Pilati* and *Descensus Christi* are the titles accepted in academic circles to call the oldest Greek and Latin texts. The so-called *Gesta Pilati*, describing

the trial, passion and burial of Jesus and the testimony of Joseph of Arimathea, does not exist independently in the Slavic tradition. Among the South and East Slavs a mediaeval compilation is known which is in effect a combination of *Acta* and *Descensus Christi*, and which we define as EN (*Evangelium Nicodemi*) (using the term given by Medievalists and Byzantinists). Gesta *Pilati* and *Epistula Pilati* based on the research of scholars dealing with the Slavic tradition (of which the Greek or Latin original has not yet been found), we define as GEP *(Gesta* and *Epistula Pilati*). By *Cyclus Pilati* we define different combinations of the texts circulating besides the *Gesta Pilati* (and *Descensus Christi ad inferos*): *Anaphora Pilati*; *Paradosis Pilati*; *Epistula Pilati ad Tiberium*; *Vindicta Salvatoris*; *Epistulae Pilati et Herodis*; *Mors Pilati; Narratio Iosephi ab Arimathea; Narratio de Martha*. For us, a composition of particular importance is the combination of *Anaphora* and *Paradosis Pilati* (we suggest to give it a name of Cyclus Pilati D).

With the term 'version' we define a variant of the Old Church Slavonic[1]: Bulgarian, Croatian, Russian or Serbian; 'redaction' is a way of working on a text (the long and short variants, and the different compositions belonging to the *Cyclus Pilati*). A 'copy' is usually a variant of some redaction of the text, but not from a linguistic point of view.

3. In speaking of EN, and GEP and the different compositions belonging to the *Cyclus Pilati*, we mean the history of the texts in the Slavic manuscript tradition belonging to the area of *Slavia Orthodoxa*, and partially to the tradition of *Slavia Romana* (Croatia, the Great Moravian Empire) – an area defined by some scholars as *Slavia Cyrillo-Methodiana* (IXth-Xth cent.). In fact, it is a group of pseudo-canonical texts translated from Greek or Latin and connected to the trial and crucifixion of Jesus, His descent into hell and resurrection, and with those who took part in these events: Pilate, Herod, Joseph of Arimathea, Emperor Tiberius and others. Medieval scholars named it the *Gospel of Nicodemus* because in the prologue to one redaction Nicodemus is mentioned as a witness of the events and

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1. Old Church Slavonic – a sacral language come into being in the half of the IXth cent. on the base of the Slavic dialects from the region of Thessalonike and codified in the first translations of the Biblical and liturgical texts, made by Sts Cyril and Methodius in connection with the Moravian mission (863-866). Later (from the end of the IXth cent. till XVIIth cent.), the national versions of this language have come into being: the Bulgarian one, Serbian, Russian and others.

wrote them down. A parallel name to the GN is the *Acts of Pilate*.

The text consists of three parts: firstly the description of the trial of Jesus and His Passion (chapters 1-12), secondly – the history of the good 'thief', the imprisoning and deliverance of Joseph of Arimathea (chapters 12-16), thirdly – the descent into hell (chapters 17-27). These three independent compositions testify to the skills of the compiler. The original language of the GN, arising probably in the beginning of the IVth cent., is Greek. There are two known redactions of the text: A – without *Descensus* and B – mediaeval – with *Descensus* [Starowieyski 2003, p. 34]. The most ancient translation, dating back to the Vth cent., is a Latin one (preserved on a parchment from the Vth cent.) [Starowieyski 2003, p. 634]. Today three versions of the GN are known and mixed variants. Though its beginnings are supposed to come from the IVth cent., it is supposed to include some earlier traditions (IInd-IIIrd cent.). It is also supposed that *Descensus*, probably in Latin, came into being in the VIth cent. [Gounelle - Izydorczyk 1997, p. 114s.] and in this part the greatest distinctions between the old Greek and Latin texts can be seen.

The GN has been translated into different Slavic languages. We know that Old Czech and Old Polish translations exist, in this article, however, we will concentrate on the translations from Greek and Latin known in different versions of Old Slavic.

The popularity of the GN in the old Slavic literatures of the *Slavia Orthodoxa* area, is without a doubt a consequence of its being used in the liturgy: some liturgical indications testify that the GN was used as the evangelical reading on Holy Saturday[2]. There are about 190 copies in the Slavic manuscript tradition (Glagolitic and Cyrillic) dating back to the XIIIth and XVIIIth cent. in four versions of Old Slavic: Bulgarian, Croatian, Russian and Serbian; and the majority of them are connected to different Greek and Latin compositions belonging to the so called *Cyclus Pilati*.

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2. About using the GN in the Orthodox liturgy cf. A. Vaillant, *Evangelium Nicodemi. Texte slave et texte latin*, Paris 1968. About using the apocryphal texts in the Orthodox liturgy cf. A. Naumow, *Apokryfy w systemie literatury cerkiewnosłowiańskiej*, Wrocław – Warszawa – Kraków – Gdańsk 1976, p. 64; Т. Јовановић, *Апокрифи старозаветни према српским преписима*, Београд 2005, p. 17-22; G. Minczew, *Starotestamentowe teksty pseudokanoniczne w południowosłowiańskiej tradycji rękopiśmiennej*, [w]: *Apokryfy i legendy starotestamentowe Słowian Południowych*, wyb. i red. G. Minczew, M. Skowronek, Kraków 2006, p. XX.

The history of textological research into the Slavic translations of the GN shows clearly all the difficulties which scholars working on pseudo-canonical New Testament texts have to face. The publications of André Vaillant [Vaillant 1968] in a way codify a position derived from the end of the XIXth cent. He states that the GN was translated from a long redaction containing *Gesta (Acta) Pilati* and *Descensus Christi ad inferos* (EN). More or less at the same time in Bulgaria the so-called short redaction of the apocrypha was translated from Greek (containing *Acta Pilati* and a short letter from Pilate to Tiberius – GEP). As appendices to his monograph, Vaillant publishes: (1) a critical edition of the long redaction based on three manuscripts; the oldest of them is manuscript No 1264 from the Russian National Library in St Petersburg with parallels from a Latin text of the Xth cent. (the so-called *Einsiedeln Codex*, Stiftsbibliothek, No 326); (2) a short redaction based on three Slavic texts with Greek parallels (the so-called *Book of the Sermons of Mihanović*, a Serbian codex from the XIIIth cent. with readings from a short Russian copy from the XVIIth cent.). Following Vaillant's monograph some studies have appeared; among them, with special significance for research into the text, are the catalogue of Aurelio de Santos Otero, the critical review by Francis J. Thomson, and articles by Angelina Minčeva and Natalia Kobyak. The last four, like the review of the Slavic tradition by T. Allan Smith[3], which has not been published yet, correct some older viewpoints and present new arguments about the textual web of the copies and their relations to the different Greek texts. The review of editions and studies from the end of the XIXth cent. until the present day, given below, may help in ordering research priorities on the Slavic textological tradition, and establish some principles for a possible edition of the text.

4. EN, GEP and different variants of *Cyclus Pilati* were discovered by Slavic scholars in the XIXth cent. At that time some editions of the texts based on manuscripts from Serbian, Czech and Russian libraries appeared. The first editor of the *Acta Pilati* was Vaclav Hanka, publishing the GN according to the manuscript in the National Museum in Prague [Hanka 1860]. Editions of each text appeared usually without comparison with other Slavic copies and they may be classified into two groups:
– the long redaction: *Gesta (Acta) Pilati* and *Descensus Christi ad inferos* (EN);

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3. The authors thank Prof. Jean-Daniel Dubois for the opportunity to use possibility of using the manuscript.

– the short redaction: *Gesta (Acta) Pilati* and a short *Epistula Pilati ad Tiberium* (GEP).

It can be said that these editions reflect two main hypotheses on the place of the original translations: according to the first one, the so-called long redaction is a translation from Latin made about the Xth cent. on the territory of the present Croatia and Slovenia (Polivka and Speranskij) the other one from Sobolevskij and Speranskij (who changed his views in later studies probably under the influence of Sobolevskij) says that the translation from Latin was made at the same time in Moravia. Almost all the authors agree that the short redaction came into life as a translation from Greek made in Bulgaria at the same time or a bit later than the long one.

5. A new phase in studying the text of the GN begins with the monograph of Vaillant in 1968. As mentioned earlier, the French philologist repeats the arguments of previous scholars about the two redactions of the text, supporting the Croatian-Slovene hypothesis of Speranskij and Polivka about the origin of the primary text of the long redaction – a translation from Latin made in the Xth cent. [Vaillant 1968, p. X]. As two appendices to his work, Vaillant publishes:
– firstly, the long redaction according to manuscript nr 1264 from the Russian National Library in St Petersburg edited by Speranskij – with readings from a Serbian manuscript from the XVth cent. edited by Stojanović, and a Russian one from the XVIIth cent., edited by Franko.
– secondly, the short redaction based on the *Book of Sermons of Mihanović* from the XIIIth cent. edited by Speranskij, with readings from a Serbian manuscript from the XVIth cent. edited by Daničić and a Russian manuscript from the XVIIth-XVIIIth cent., edited by Porfir'ev. The author publishes a parallel Greek text, without pointing out where it comes from.

Independently from the fact that Vaillant uses texts that have already been published and repeats some of the earlier hypotheses, it would be far too simple to state that his monograph does not put forward any new elements into the research history of the texts. The new arguments in his publication may be classified as follows:
– firstly, the author tries to define the origins of the long redaction: in his opinion it was in the Xth cent. in a Benedictine monastery in Croatia or Dalmatia[4];

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4. "Mais où étaient les centres importants de culture slave au X^{e} siècle? Il semble qu'il faille les chercher plus au sud, en Croatie et Dalmatie, où les monastères bénédictins se multiplient à cette époque, et ce sont les Bénédic-

– secondly, his hypothesis has importance concerning the beginnings of the short redaction[5]. Referring to his earlier research [Vaillant 1958] he states that the short redaction came into life in Bulgaria on the basis of the new Greek translation of *Acta Pilati*, and at the same time *Descensus Christi* was removed from the translation, and replaced by the *Sermon of the Harrowing of Hell* by Epiphanius (which became a liturgic reading for the Holy Saturday) [about the sermon: Ivanova-Mirčeva 1975; Capaldo 1978];
– finally, in the Cyrillic texts Vaillant discovers some traces of the Glagolitic alphabet. Because of the deceptive numeric values of individual Cyrillic letters, the author came to the conclusion that it may have been the Glagolitic system of the alphabet, which testifies to an early translation of both long and short redactions.

However, the edition of the French scholar is not a model and some of the shortcomings are given below:
– firstly, the author has not worked *in viso* with the Slavic texts. He uses only a limited number of manuscripts from some earlier editions of the different redactions which makes him unable to give a precise critical commentary;
– secondly, the same argument refers to the Latin and Greek parallels. The author does not know the Latin text from Vienna (from the Vth cent.), and the Greek parallels to the short redaction are also insufficient evidence.

Some of the drawbacks of this edition were indicated in the review by Aitzetmüller [Aitzetmüller 1970, see also Aitzetmüller 1969]. The main impression of the Austrian Slavist is, that Vaillant submits *textus mixtus* as the long redaction: "the Latin one – the compilation of different variants corresponds well with the Slavic version, and for the Slavic texts – some extracts of the main manuscript (from the Russian National Library) are partially reconstructed by readings from the others two manuscripts and the Latin text" [after Minčeva 1985, p. 31].

Following the publication of Vaillant's edition, discussion about the location of the primary translation continued. The Czech Slavists support the Moravian hypothesis and include the

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tins qui ont été les plus fermes soutiens de la liturgie slave et de la langue littéraire slave." (p. XXVIII).

5. "Ainsi la traduction de l'*Évangile de Nicodème*, sur le latin, doit être du X^{e} siècle, en vieux slave occidental. Et vers la même époque on traduisait les deux correspondants grecs de cet apocryphe: l'Homélie d'Épiphane substituée à la deuxième partie, la Descente aux enfers, en vieux slave de Macédoine; et la première partie, les *Actes de Pilate*, en vieux slave oriental de Bulgarie" (p. XIV).

GN as an element of the corpus (collection) of Old Slavic texts in the famous Prague dictionary as the 'Moravian version' [*Slovník jazyka staroslověnského* 1959, I]. F. V. Mareš also asserts that the GN was translated in the XIXth-Xth cent. in Moravia [1979, p. 31-40].

Of particular importance for studies on the Glagolitic-Croatian tradition are the publications of the Slavists connected with Zagreb [Stefanić] and, especially, of Biserka Grabar [Grabar 1965; Grabar 1970; Grabar 1979]. It would be natural to expect that in these publications the hypothesis of the primacy of the Croatian-Dalmatian translation would be supported. However, it is more important in this case to underline that Grabar is far from accepting the argument for an early translation (Xth-XIth cent.) of the Slavic texts. The Slavists from Zagreb introduced into academic circulation two texts from Glagolitic manuscripts: the first one, based on fragments from the XVth cent. preserved in the Archives of the Croatian Academy of Sciences (*Hrvatska Akademija Znanosti i Umjetnosti*), is edited by Štefanić, and the second one, based on the so-called Pazinski fragments from the XIVth cent., also preserved in Zagreb, has been edited by Grabar in 1970.

An interesting voice in the discussion on the sources of the Croatian Glagolitic tradition (and the sources of the GN in general) is that of Giorgio Ziffer whose paper was based on the position that the Croatian Glagolitic texts depend on the Old German manuscript tradition.

6. The next step of research into the Slavic tradition began by Aurelio de Santos Otero. In his catalogue of pseudo-canonical Slavic compositions [Santos Otero 1981, p. 61-98] he mentions 167 East, West and South Slavic manuscripts containing 183 copies of different texts belonging to *Cyclus Pilati* dating from the XIIth-XIIIth until the XVIIIth cent.

For the Slavic variants collected under the common name of the GN, Santos Otero distinguishes some Greek and Latin texts serving as a base for the Slavic translations (except the compilations). The most important are *Gesta Pilati* (kept in two Slavic variants, of which the longer one corresponds with the Latin GN) and *Descensus Christi ad inferos*. As secondary sources *Anaphora Pilati*, *Paradosis Pilati*, *Narratio Iosephi ab Arimathea* and *Tiberii rescriptum* are pointed out.

Santos Otero points out three Slavic redactions of the GN. The first one (long) is represented by texts composed in the Xth-XIth cent., and which preserved copies dated from the XIVth-XVth cent. The short redaction is a reduction only including the first and second part of the long one (*Acta Pilati*) and does not

contain the last ten chapters (the third part: *Descensus*). It is based on the Greek original, though later fragments translated from Latin were introduced into the Slavic variants. The oldest of the short redaction manuscripts dates back to the XIIIth cent. (In some manuscripts a particular version is connected with the letter from Pilate to Emperor Tiberius, for which a Greek primary has not yet been found.) The third and the youngest (dating back to the XIIIth and XIVth cent.) redaction (copies from the XVIth and XVIIIth cent.) mentioned by de Santos Otero is designated a 'mixed' one. It is a compilation of the material introduced by the two earlier redactions and refers, above all, to the East Slavic texts/ copies (although it is not clear if he means a new translation of the *Acta Pilati* arose among the East Slavs).

This very extensive list is not free of mistakes as pointed out by Francis J. Thomson and Angelina Minčeva, and recently by Natalia Kobyak and T. Allan Smith. The strange order of the manuscripts in the individual parts of the catalogue and the alphabetical order of the places in which they are preserved (not consistent either: the names of the cities are given sometimes in German) is not very important. In Thomson's opinion, the catalogue contains many inaccuracies, particularly in the quotations of titles and the origins of the copies already published; using the terms 'Old Slavic', 'Old Bulgarian', and 'Church Slavonic' is very controversial. The brief archaeological and bibliographical data in particular do not show which of the redactions is represented by the text. Worse is that the commentaries concerning the condition of the copies are not always complete – and not always true, as in case of the Belgrade manuscript (No 328, de Santos Otero No 3), burnt during the Second World War, and which is not mentioned in the catalogue.

Thomson does not add much on the relation of the Greek and Latin sources to the Slavic texts given by Santos Otero but he makes them more specific. He points out the originally Greek *Acta Pilati*; a Latin translation (from Greek) of *Descensus Christi*; a Greek paraphrase of *Acta* (with *Descensus* and without *Epistolae*); an Old Latin *Epistula Pilati ad imperatorem Claudium* (marked as A, B, C and D). In his opinion the GN (a term which does not appear in the manuscripts) in fact is *Cyclus Pilati*, including the texts mentioned above (*Anaphora*, *Paradosis*, *Narratio Iosephi* and *Tiberii rescriptum*). From this last group *Anaphora* and *Paradosis* would be particularly important for creating the Slavic variants of the GN.

Thomson's achievement is, above all, in ordering almost two hundred Slavic copies based on the groups (texts designated A,

B, C, D) according to their sources. Unlike de Santos Otero he attributes to the individual groups of texts some circumstances arising from the redaction (variant) of the text they represent. He corrects the titles and origins, points out publications that have not been mentioned (the editions of Ilinskij, Stojanović, Jagić, Speranskij, Franko, Tupikov and Porfir'ev – see Appendix) and copies (e.g. the story of Martha sentencing Pilate from a manuscript in the National Library in Sofia), he includes Maxim the Greek, a translator of the *Acta*, *Anaphora* and *Tiberii rescriptum*, discusses the inconsistent selection of the texts given by de Santos Otero and includes the edition of the Old Polish translation of the GN. Thomson corrects the classification of the texts to the versions, as de Santos Otero in some cases takes a part as a whole, makes a mistake when he defines the circumstances in which the translation of *Passio Christi* was made and when he specifies the sources (*Acta Petri et Pauli*).

To the manuscripts presented by de Santos Otero – Thomson, Kobyak and Allan Smith add five others, dated mainly from the XVIth and XVIIIth cent. (some without dates), three of which were published (two in the XIXth cent.).

The article by Minčeva was published in the same year as a critical review by Thomson. The research of the Bulgarian palaeo-Slavist is – in a way – an academic answer to the study of Vaillant. She makes a serious revision of the literature published by the time of his monograph, she reviews the Greek and Latin manuscript traditions (according to the classification of Tischendorf) and criticises the parallel texts of both long and short redactions. Minčeva draws particular attention to the language of the text, the syntax and lexical forms which testify to the connection between the Slavic text and the Latin original of the so-called long redaction and is willing to consider the time when the Slavic redaction arose: "The view of the GN as a whole testifies to a dependence on an individual translation from Latin, made in the Slovene-Croatian language area, as an instrument of the literary language (already existing in Moravia-Pannonia and Bulgaria) were used". And another valuable remark: "The lexical variants point out a rather later period for establishing the translation (not the Xth cent.) than the main early redaction and appearance of the two groups of manuscripts" [Minčeva 1985, p. 42]. The observations of Minčeva are a solid support for the opinion of Grabar about the later appearance of the translation/s.

Kobyak divides the Slavic texts of the GN into the long redaction, translated from Latin, and the short one translated from Greek, and her detailed conclusions are devoted mainly to

the East Slavic tradition. The scholar establishes two long redactions, and a short one which is supposed to rely on a translation from Greek in the XIIIth - XIVth cent. and differs from the preceding ones with the lack of a *Descensus*. The long redactions however have an affinity – and vary as regards the presence and order of the presented events and names of the characters. The first long redaction contains three 'subgroups', represented by the text edited by Vaillant (de Santos Otero No 60), a copy from the Rogozhskoe kladbishche coll. No 570 from the Russian State Library in Moscow (edited in Mil'kov 1999) – both close to the 'Czech tradition', and MS. de Santos Otero No 132 (with an affinity to the *Book of Sermons of Mihanović*). The second long redaction is represented (among others – de Santos Otero Nos 34, 38), by a MS from the Russian National Library Pogodin coll. No 947 (lacking in the de Santos Otero catalogue) and only by Russian copies. The first two Allan Smith defines as belonging to types B (with unclear principles of classification) and F (a Ukrainian redaction from the XVIIth cent.). In the opinion of Kobyak, this redaction does not show any differences from the preceding one; its peculiarity relying on the inaccuracy of opinions concerning its origins. Although pointing out some unknown copies and 'new' redactions of the GN, the article seems to be a bit superficial because of the lack of principles of classification of the East redactions or types. Kobyak does not explain the relations of the East Slavic redactions given by herself to the whole corpus of the Slavic GN.

Allan Smith has worked much more precisely on the Slavic GN. He is concerned critically with some issues made by Thomson and Kobyak, but uncritically repeats data from de Santos Otero's catalogue – as in the case of the no longer existing manuscript from the National Library in Belgrade. In some places he points out – but does not always suggest a revision of – the unclear principles of classification of particular texts to the redactions/ groups. In other cases he discusses the classification of Thomson and Kobyak's suggestions. He divides the copies of the long redaction into 22 'subgroups', marking them in alphabetical order; however, some copies are still not classified (de Santos Otero Nos 86, 146; 43, 57, 69, 115, 129) or defined as miscellanea (de Santos Otero Nos 2, 89, 90, 155).

However, such a precise division does not seem convincing as a whole. Two of these groups – types E1 and H1 – are in fact 'later revisions' of the preceding E and H. Maybe if the differences which separate them were given – as a different use of the material – it would not be questioned. Its practical helpfulness in research on the Slavic GN is not very clear: in this case preci-

sion has eclipsed the picture of the Slavic tradition. He does not take into his account a diachronic formulation of the problem, presenting only the sources of the Slavic translations and not the history of how they arose and the progress of individual redactions against a solid base of the text enriched with later translations and compilations.

Preparing a list of manuscripts containing texts connected with the GN, Allan Smith raises a lot of questions which may be used to indicate further studies on the texts. He points out the necessity of determining 'the most important' Slavic text (especially for the *Acta Pilati* Group) and a critical edition – but which version? Old Russian, Old Serbian, Old Czech? He qualifies them, in fact, as 'Old Slavic' and 'reconstructed version'. Allan Smith does not answer these questions and, in addition, does not have access to the sources, so he does not work from the text. He only suggests an edition of a text representing the second long East Slavic (according to Kobyak) redaction of the GN.

In the articles of the authors described above (Thomson, Kobyak, Allan Smith) there is no agreement about the Slavic redactions of the GN. This discrepancy is particularly well seen in two recent attempts to classify copies in terms of particular redactions. For instance, in the opinion of Kobyak, six texts representing the second long East Slavic redaction in Allan Smith's studies belong to the short one. However, without reading these texts it is hard to confirm either hypothesis – especially, as Kobyak does not explain the relation of the so-called East Slavic redaction to the whole of the Slavic GN corpus.

Recent contributions relating to the GN do not put forward any new hypotheses.

In 1992 Maurice Geerard's catalogue *Clavis Apocryphorum Novis Testamenti* was published. The author acknowledges the existence of Slavic translations of the individual parts of the *Cyclus Pilati*, but unfortunately, uses only early research by de Santos Otero and, above all, Thomson's review. And, as Thomson does not mention the edition of Vaillant, it is not mentioned here! Apart from that, *Clavis Apocryphorum Novis Testamenti* seems to be a valuable tool for Slavists, as it gives much information about Greek and Latin manuscripts/ texts and about critical editions of Greek and Latin sources which had not been considered in Slavist research.

Vladimir Mil'kov published the text of the second long, East Slavic (according to Kobyak) redaction based on a manuscript from the Russian State Library (Rogozhskoe kladbishche coll. No 570), without other parallel texts or a Russian translation

either. In the commentary he repeats the viewpoint of Kobyak about two individual Russian redactions of the translation of the GN.

7. The initial conclusions of the review of the publications of the Slavic texts and studies on the GN may be organized into few 'problematic groups':
– firstly, the relation between Greek and/or Latin texts to the Slavic translation/s. It is necessary to look again through the critical reading of the so-called long redaction of the GN (according to a classification introduced in Slavic studies in the XIXth cent.) and refer the manuscripts belonging to it to the greater number of Latin manuscripts/ copies (the edited fragment from the library in Vienna and, possibly, later Latin manuscripts). Another problem is the research into the relation between Greek sources and Slavic translations of both long and short redactions. In Slavic studies two positions on the relation of Greek sources to the Slavic translations exist. The older generation of Slavists accept as a base for classifying an order established by Tischendorf: *Acta Pilati* is known in two redactions A (8 MSS) and B (3 MSS), and the Latin texts (translated from Greek, but in many cases considerably different from them) – in one version (10 MSS). For *Descensus Christi* Tischendorf gives one Greek redaction (A – 3 MSS) and two Latin ones (A – 5 MSS and B – 3 MSS) [see also Minčeva 1985, p. 32-33]. In the later studies [Thomson 1985] four groups of Slavic manuscripts are mentioned which fit the four groups of Greek and Latin texts (designated A, B, C, D). Unfortunately, their author does not follow up his arguments which need to be examined textologically, and until then we cannot be sure about particular redactions, groups and subgroups of Slavic texts and their relation to individual Greek and Latin manuscripts;
– secondly, until now in research on the Slavic tradition there has been no unequivocal position on grouping the texts. Since the XIXth cent., according to Vaillant, it has been assumed that two redactions, a long and a short one, exist and they are supposed to depend on Latin and Greek texts. De Santos Otero speaks of three redactions, adding – to the short and long – another 'mixed' one he calls 'A'. In his studies, however, a further problem arises concerning the three redactions as other parts of the *Cyclus Pilati* are added which had appeared in different periods. Thomson points out four groups of Slavic texts, referring to four groups of Greek and Latin manuscripts. Kobyak accepts the older standpoint of two redactions, but she includes three other East Slavic linguistic redactions which refer to the long variant (two groups) and to the short one (one

group). Smith speaks about 24 groups and subgroups of both the long and short redactions! Additional work is indispensable to specify terms and textology in questions concerning the ordering of the texts into groups and into the translation-redaction-variant relation;
– finally, however other scholars researching the GN in fact include different texts in the *Cyclus Pilati*. As mentioned earlier, this is also our position. In the Byzantine-Latin tradition it is different: *Acta Pilati*, *Descensus Christi* or combinations of them are known as the GN. However, if we view the Slavic tradition in the extended context, it is also indispensable to analyse texts translated from Greek or Latin later. It is very characteristic of the Slavic tradition that after establishing (however approximately) the base (of the GN) which consists of translations of the *Acta Pilati* new texts are introduced. The first one is *The Sermon of the Harrowing of Hell* by Epiphanius, which replaced *Descensus* in the XIth cent. Another one is *Narratio de Martha* ascribed to St John Chrysostom, a combination of different texts coming from translations belonging to *Cyclus Pilati* which appeared probably in the XVth cent. in Bulgaria and known particularly from the South Slavic tradition and published a few times. We should also consider some texts connected with late translations, dating from the XVIIth cent., from the East Slavic (Russian, Ukrainian) tradition, and which is only represented by East Slavic copies – including a translation of the composition *Passio Christi* made from Latin, probably with help from Polish.

8. A critical edition of the Slavic texts should not begin with EN or GEP, but with a group of early-translated texts from the *Cyclus Pilati* for the following reasons:
– Vaillant includes his own chosen selections of the two groups mentioned above. As said before, this edition is not a model – in terms of the selection of the Slavic sources and the presentation of parallel Latin and Greek texts, and finally in the author's attempt to amalgamate texts which gives, as a result, his own *textus mixtus*. However, if we accept the need to edit EN or GEP again, our work would then only include the taking of more Slavic, Latin and Greek manuscripts into a critical commentary and to translate them into a modern language;
– In planning an edition of the Slavic GN and related texts, we will rely mostly on a group of texts which are named (in the reviews of Thomson and Allan Smith) 'Group D' (*Cyclus Pilati* D). They are to represent the earliest Slavic translation of the *Anaphora* (BHG 779xI and 779yI combined) with *Paradosis Pilati* (in a form similar to the one from the MS Veneto Mar-

ciano Greco II 42). At the moment about fifteen Slavic copies of the combination of *Anaphora* with *Paradosis* are known, both in manuscripts and already edited forms (according to the reviews of Thomson and Allan Smith):

1. **Manuscripts:**

(1) St Petersburg, BAN, 33.13.11 (Nov. 406, de Santos Otero No 37), Zlatoust, XVIIth cent., *ff.* 89-93 (Сице послание пилатово кь тивирию кесарю, *inc.* коль дерьжавному и зело честному);
(2) St Petersburg, RNB (F 717), Soloveckij manastir coll. No 124 (1034), XVIIth cent., *ff.* 349-354 (Вьзношение послано от пилата к тиверию, *inc.* Вельдержавному и зело);
(3) St Petersburg, RNB (F 717), Soloveckij manastir coll. No 683 (852), XVIIIth cent., *ff.* 323-328 (Послание пилатово кь тиверию кесарю вь римь о И. Х., no *inc.*)
(4) Moscow, GIM, Uvarov coll. 1814 (617, Carski No 421, de Santos Otero no 102, XVIIth cent., *ff.* 1-5 (Слово о предании и страсти спасове, no *inc.*)
(5) Moscow, GIM, Uvarov coll. 1889 (162, de Santos Otero No 105), XVIIth cent., *ff.* 9-15 (Послание пилата кь тиверию кесарю о содеянныхь оть господа святыхь чюдесь, no *inc.*)
(6) Moscow, GIM, Vakhrameev coll. 427 (De Santos Otero No 110), XVIth cent., *ff.* 140'-156 (Возношение пилатово к тиверию царию, *inc.* Веледержавному... тиверию кесарю азь пилать поньтескыи вьсточныя станы область предержавь)
(7) Moscow, RGB (F 178), Muzejnoe coll. 367 (de Santos Otero No 120), XVIIth cent., *ff.* 164-173 (Возношние от пилата послано к тивирию кесарю в римь о содеянныхь господемь нашимь И. Х. <a combination of *Acta* and *Descensus* with *Anaphora* and *Paradosis*>)
(8) Moscow, RGB (F 310), Undolskij coll. (de Santos Otero No 139), XVIIth cent., *ff.* 229-241 (Послание пилатово кь тивирию царю вь римь, *inc.* Ко державному и зело честному, божественому и стройному тивирию)

2. **Text editions**:

(1) De Santos Otero No 4 (burnt 6.04.1941), Belgrade, National Library No 305, *ff.* 10-11, XIVth cent., Слово о предании господа нашего, *inc.* Вельми дрьжавному и зело чьстьному и велми строиному тиберию кесеру азь пилать понитьскыи, [in:] Speranskij, p. 152;

(2) De Santos Otero No 82, Moscow, RGADA, F 381, Moskovskaja sinodal'naja tipografija No 1 (53), Silvestrovskij sbornik, XIVth cent., *ff*. 83-88', Послание пилатово к тиверию кесарю римьскому, *inc*. Вельдержавному и зело честному и божественому стронному тиверию кесарю азь пилать понтескыи, [in:] Speranskij, p. 153-155;
(3) De Santos Otero No 183, Belgrade, National Library No 437, Triod 1328, *ff*. 250-264', Вьзношение и писание от пилата вь рим кь тиверию кесарю, *inc*. Великодьржавному и зело чьстьному и вельми устроеному, [in:] Stojanović, p. 240-250;
(4) De Santos Otero No 175, St Petersburg, RNB, Osnovnoe coll., No F.п.I.102, Triod XIIth-XIIIth cent., *ff*. 179-181', Вьзношение и послание от пилата в римь, *inc*. Вельдржавному и зело честному велми устроеному тивериаку кесарию, [in:] Il'inskij, p. 213-217;
(5) De Santos Otero No 55, St Petersburg, RNB, F 560, No Q.п.I.56, Panegyric from Mount Sinai, XIIIth cent., *ff*. 10'-17, Послание тиверию кесарю в римь от пилата о сьдеяни господи нашему, *inc*. Великодрьжавному и зело чьстному тиверию кесару азь пилать поньтьскы, [in:] Jagić, p. 793-822;
(6) De Santos Otero No 71, St Petersburg, RNB (F 717), Soloveckij manastir coll. (old) No 854, XVIth-XVIIth cent., *ff*. 39-44, Вьзношение послано от пилата о сьдеянныхь господемь нашимь И. Х., *inc*. Веледрьжавному и зело чьстному и божественному и вельми страшному тиверию кесарю, азь пилать, [in:] Porfir'ev, p. 174-204;
(7) De Santos Otero No 118, Moscow, RGB F 178, Muzejnoe coll. No 358, XVth-XVIth cent., *ff*. 284-290, Послание изь иерусалима оть пилата в римь кь тивирию кесарю римскому, *inc*. Великому, дрьжавному, благочестному, велми стронному тиверию кесарю, [in:] Pypin, p. 106-109.

It is obvious that the question of dating this early translation must be examined in a scholarly way. It is indispensable to confront the older hypothesis (not based strongly enough on the linguistic material) about the appearance of the redactions in the Xth cent., with the linguistic arguments of Grabar and particularly Minčeva, concerning the translation made later (after the beginning of the XIth cent.).

From this group D of 16 copies (without the burnt No 328 from Belgrade), seven are edited and among them is the oldest one dating back to the turn of the XIIIth cent. However, another of the oldest is worth some attention. This manuscript is preserved in the Russian National Library in St-Petersburg (No 124, de Santos Otero No 67) and may be used as a base for com-

parison of the copies of this group (mostly already edited, though we are considering reaching further 'unknown' ones) in the critical edition. We cannot exclude the fact that some of the principles we have accepted in the process of our work may be changed. Of particular interest in group D from the textological point of view are:
– firstly, the most archaic Slavic redaction arose about the time of the appearance of EN;
– secondly, the (unknown) relation between Slavic translations and Greek texts, not yet examined, giving an opportunity for effective cooperation between Slavists and Byzantinists;
– finally, these texts, almost unknown in Slavic and Byzantine studies, might be interesting for a wider audience if they are accompanied by a good translation into any modern language.

It is obvious that our suggestions do not exclude a parallel work with the correction of EN (GEP) in Vaillant's edition. At this stage we cannot, however, take any position as a certainty because of the main issue: the relation between Slavic, Latin and Greek sources. It seems to us that to question some of the older positions on this early translation needs serious research on all the texts in this group.

9. This article is an initial review of the research and publications of the Slavic translations of the GN and related texts. We hope to have managed in presenting the complicated problems about the relations between the Slavic redactions dating from different times, their copies and the Greek and Latin compositions serving as the base for some translations. Translated probably for the first time at the turn of the Xth cent., the Slavic GN has a mosaic character and is a compilation of different parts of the translated texts belonging to the *Cyclus Pilati*. Gradually, up to until the XIVth-XVth cent., Slavic translations of the other Greek compositions from the Cycle were added to the main group of already translated compositions (*Gesta Pilati*, *Descensus Christi ad inferos* and *Epistula Pilati ad Tiberii*). At the same time in later translations and versions the text of *Descensus Christi ad inferos* is removed, as this composition was replaced after the XIth cent. in the South Slavic tradition with the *Sermon of the Harrowing of Hell* by Epiphanius, used also in liturgical practice.

There are many problems connected with a future critical edition of the Slavic translations because a great number of the copies belonging to different redactions refer to different language versions of Old Church Slavonic arising in different cultural environments and times. Texts published so far do not reflect in all cases the complicated historical and cultural context of the translations and their diffusion. We consider that ini-

tial textological research of the Slavic tradition should, at the moment, concentrate on:
– firstly, possibly collecting a great number of the Slavic copies belonging to different translations and versions/redactions of the text. Publications of the texts (including the edition of Vaillant) include only a few copies so it is hard to define them as critical editions;
– secondly, defining the suitable Greek and Latin texts serving as a base for particular translations/ redactions;
– thirdly, the textual web of about 190 Slavic copies belonging to different redactions of the GN;
– fourthly, the mosaic character of what we define as the Slavic GN requires the editing of not only one, but several Slavic and Greek, and Slavic and Latin texts, which may present the way in which other parts of the *Cyclus Pilati* were gradually added or removed. We suggest that the work should start with a parallel edition of the Slavic and Greek texts according to the manuscripts from group D mentioned in section 8;
– finally, an assessment of the positions concerning the Slavic translations already suggested. Very often scholars dealing with the Slavic GN have taken for granted the, often imprecise, positions and conclusions of previous researchers. They do not base their theories and hypotheses on original copies and working *in viso* with Greek, Latin and Slavic manuscripts. This paper is only a first step in this direction. We have tried to address critically different positions on the published texts. Our present work is in an initial stage and some of our statements may not be very precise as the examination and confrontation of a great number of Slavic, Greek and Latin manuscripts is indispensable. We do hope, however, that we have managed in presenting the complicated overall picture of the problem connected with the textological tradition of the compositions belonging to the Slavic GN and to dispel (even partially) some myths connected with the translations and diffusion of the composition in Old Slavic literatures.

APPENDIX

RECENTLY FOUND COPIES OF THE GOSPEL OF NICODEMUS, NOT INCLUDED TO THE REGISTERS OF DE SANTOS OTERO, THOMSON AND T.A. SMITH (according to the review of Jovanović)
(1) St. Catherine Monastery in Mount Sinai, XIVth cent., No 33, *ff.* 173-181' (long redaction);

(2) Cavtat, XVIth cent., Baltazar Bogišić coll. (without No), fragment (long redaction);
(3) Novi Sad, XVIth-XVIIth cent., Matica Srpska Library, No 129, *ff*. 105-136 (long redaction).

ABBREVIATIONS

BAN = Библиотека Академии Наук, Санкт-Петербург [St Petersburg, The Library of the Academy of Sciences]

GIM = Государственный Исторический музей, Москва [Moscow, The Museum of History]

RGB = Российская Государственная библиотека, Москва [Moscow, The Russian State Library]

RGADA = Российский Государственнный Архив Древных Актов, Москва [Moscow, The Russian State Archives ot the Old Actes]

RNB = Российская Национальная библиотека, Санкт-Петербург [St Petersburg, The Russian National Library]

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